2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER VIII

DOMESTIC LIFE

181

THE Burman is the most calm and contented of mortals. He does not want to grow rich. When he does make a large sum of money, he spends it all on some pious work, and rejoices in the thought that this will meet with its reward in his next existence. If he never amasses enough to build any great public work, at any rate he subscribes what he can, and is generous in almsgiving. A bountiful soil will not let its children starve; and so the Burman jogs on through a cheerful existence, troubled by no anxious cares, and free from all the temptations of ambition. His daily round is simple enough. In the morning, after his bath, he loiters about, talking to the neighbours till breakfast time, or perhaps strolls out to the corner of his paddy field, and indulges in a contemplative smoke. After breakfast he probably dozes through the heat of the day, and when the shadows begin to get long, saunters about again. A semblance of regular labour appears when the paddy is being sown or the grain reaped, but even then no one is in the least inclined to disturb himself for the sake of rapid work. It is sufficient that you are always certain in Burma what kind of weather you are going to have. "Another hot day," or "another wet day," is quite as much a matter of course as the rising of the sun itself, and there is therefore no need to hurry operations in case of a change. The evenings are spent ordinarily at a pwè during the fine season, or in amicable converse over a cheroot at a friend's house in the rains. Variety comes occasionally in the shape of a jolting, hilarious journey to a distant pagoda feast, or a trip

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461

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma A P1
Burmese AP4
Upper Burma
Lower Burma
Europeans

down the river in the big rice-boat to one of the great milling towns. And so an uneventful life passes away: the greatest ambition to see the village boat successful at the Thadingyut races, and the village champion cock or buffalo triumphant over all others; the greatest desire to live peaceably with all men and observe the Ten Precepts; the greatest excitement the occasional visit of the English district officer, or the suspicion of a witch in that lonely house down by the spirit's pool on the creek. In Upper Burma formerly this quiet was more apt to be disturbed by the summoning of levies to serve in some special raid against audacious dacoits, or to make a demonstration against reiving mountaineers. If the myo-wun was a pious man, calls for enforced labour at digging tanks, building pagodas and monasteries, rest-houses and tazaungs, were likely to keep the villager a great deal more occupied than he cared for. There can be no doubt in any patriotic Burman's mind that the state of the people, regularly taxed though they be, under British rule, is infinitely happier than it was under their king, and all but the officials and their hangers-on longed for the day when the English flag was to float over all the land as far as Mogaung. There could be no hope for the country, where, even under a kindly king like Mindôn, ill-conditioned governors oppressed the populace with absolute impunity. Complaints were made, but his majesty could not venture to leave his palace for any great distance to inquire for himself, and gold easily dulled the senses of the highest minister round the golden throne. It is little wonder then that the people, kept perpetually in the lowest depths of poverty, were, if not actually dying out, certainly not increasing in numbers. There was nothing which so much indicated the popular feeling, and at the same time so irritated the Burmese Government, as the unceasing stream of emigrants to Lower Burma.

Nevertheless, even in Independent territory the Burman preserved his light heart and buoyant disposition. No calamity is so overwhelming as to make him despond. Some years ago a large fire occurred in Mandalay, and spread with such terrible rapidity that the inhabitants of a whole quarter were unable to save anything but the clothes they

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

wore. Some of them went the next day to the English missionary chaplain, and told him of the misfortune that had befallen them, and how so completely were they rendered destitute that they had been indebted to the charity of the inhabitants of the monastery for a breakfast that morning. The clergyman promised to do what he could for them, and the same evening went along to view the site of the fire. What was his astonishment to find that the burnt-out victims had rigged up a rude stage among the charred stumps of their house-posts, and in default of a house to sleep in, were prepared to spend the night listening to the love-making of the princes and princesses, and laughing at the caustic witticisms of the clown, not a few of the jokes being inspired by the blackened surroundings. Such defiance of all the ills of fate is very characteristic, and would seem to a Burman mind the most natural thing to do under the circumstances, since it afforded both distraction and amusement.

If any one has escaped the curse of Adam it is the Burman. He does not need to earn his bread with the sweat of his brow, and riches having no attraction for him, when his patch of paddy land has been reaped, his only concern is how to pass the time, and that is no very difficult matter, where he has plenty of cheroots and betel-nut. He can stroll along to neighbour Maung Gyi's, whose son has a knack for wood-carving, and watch him as he deftly cuts out a piece of elaborate scroll-work for the roof of a neighbouring monastery, or finishes off the grim features of a bilu for the English Inspector of Police. Next door the sayā is engaged on a painting, the representation of some palace scene, or of some well-known event in the life of the Lord Buddha. Burmese artists do not, as a rule, paint likenesses, though they are by no means unsuccessful when they make the attempt. Any one but a high official would probably consider it a mark of great presumption and conceit to hang up a picture of himself in his house. There is, however, none of the objection to portrait painting which is so common with some other nations. For example, the Mohammedans will not suffer likenesses to be drawn for fear they should command a soul on the Day of Judgment, and so some actual human being might come to be left out in the cold. Catlin

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

housewife or her daughter stepping on and off the bar, so as to raise the pestle and let it fall on the rice in the mortar. The rice is very thoroughly cleaned in this way, and Burmans prefer it to that which has passed between the mill-stones of the European factory. The Derbyshire, or composition stones, do their work only too thoroughly, and remove so much of the pellicle as to take away all the flavour, besides that the great heat caused by the steady grinding tends to the same result. Consequently the pleasant refrain of the girls chanting at their work may be heard all over the village after dark, and when a large quantity has to be prepared for some offering to the Sacred Order on a feast-day, the chanted chorus rises and falls round about the homestead often till long past "midnight cock-crow," till the rising of the "red star" warns them to retire to rest, tired, but happy, for such a good work earns great merit. A sesamum oil-press is also frequently found in at least one house in every village. This is equally simple in its construction. It consists of a deep wooden trough, in which the seeds are pressed by a heavy upright timber fixed in a frame. The weight is increased by a long lever, on the end of which a man sits and guides a bullock which goes round in a circle, thus crushing and turning the seed at the same time.

The carts are very strongly built, and are remarkable for the way in which the floor curves upwards towards the back in the same way as the boats do. In Upper Burma formerly the wheels were mostly composed of one solid, roughly-rounded slab of wood, or in some cases of two semicircular slabs joined together, and these are still found, but more and more rarely, in out-of-the-way places in the upper province, though wheels constructed in European fashion with spokes are mostly in use, and Government now prescribes a three-inch tyre on all district roads. Occasionally in the old days to save trouble the carter started with a square wheel, and trusted to time to round it for him. Padauk (*Pterocarpus indicus*) is the wood most valued for this purpose, but it is too expensive for most people. The wheels are never greased, and make hideous shrieking noises as they revolve. This serves to keep away tigers and wild

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XXXIX

LUCKY AND UNLUCKY DAYS

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It has come to be considered an axiom that the Burmese are irredeemably lazy. Some authors who have written about the country ascribe a very great number of additional bad qualities to them; others are more favourable; but all are unanimous in the declaration that they are lazy. The reverend missioner, Father San Germano, who was almost the first European to write a definite account of Burma, is the most unkind critic of all. He gathered together a great deal of information about the country during his long residence, but the opinion he formed of the people would be crushing were it not so strongly at variance with that expressed by a Christian priest who has been still longer in Burma, and whose knowledge of everything connected with it yields to none, the late Bishop Bigandet. But it is as well to see ourselves as others see us. The good father says: "The Burmese are distinguished for that timidity and servility which is the characteristic of slaves. . . . There is no contempt, oppression, or injustice they will not exercise towards their fellow-men when they can assure themselves of the protection of government. They are thus vile and abject in adversity, but arrogant and presumptuous in prosperity. There is no one amongst them, however mean, who does not aim at the dignity of mandarin (minister)." But the chief characteristic of the Burmese "is an incorrigible idleness. Instead of employing their time in improving their possessions, they prefer to give themselves up to an indolent repose; to spend the day in talking, smoking, and chewing betel, or else to become the satellites of some powerful

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Burmese AP4

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mandarin. The same hatred of labour leads to an excessive love of cunning, and also to thieving, to which they are much addicted. . . . It would seem that it is impossible for this people to tell the truth; nay, a person who ventures to do it is called a fool, a good kind of man, but not fitted for managing his affairs." Still the padre has a little good to say of them: "Besides giving daily alms to their talapoins, they all lay by something to be applied to some sort of public benefit. They are very fond of thus signalising their generosity, and will often deprive themselves of comforts to have the pleasure of being benefactors to the public." This is an unlovely picture. But the good father was apparently very unfortunate in his acquaintances.

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It is pleasant after this to turn to a soldier's opinion. Major Grant Allen says: "Unlike the generality of Asiatics, the Burmese are not a fawning race. They are cheerful, and singularly alive to the ridiculous; buoyant, elastic, soon recovering from personal or domestic disaster. Free from the prejudices of caste or creed, they readily fraternise with strangers, and at all times frankly yield to the superiority of the European. . . . Indifferent to the shedding of blood on the part of their rulers, yet not individually cruel; temperate, abstemious, and hardy, but idle, with neither fixedness of purpose nor perseverance. Discipline, or any continued employment, becomes most irksome to them, yet they are not devoid of a certain degree of enterprise."

This is a much better certificate, but still we are accused of laziness. Let us now turn to the last and the best authority on the subject (from an English point of view), Colonel Horace Browne, at one time Commissioner of Pegu, and always very popular with the Burmese. The Burman, he says, "displays much spasmodic energy and general laziness, much love of feasts and shows, much disregard of the sacredness of human life, and much tenderness for the lives of inferior members of the animal kingdom, much arrogance and inconsiderateness when placed in high position, and last, though not least, much general truthfulness, and, amongst unsophisticated villagers, the very unoriental trait of being unable to tell a specious falsehood."

The hauteur complained of towards strangers is princi-

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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pally due to the fact that the stranger is not a Buddhist, and has not as a boy been admitted into a monastery. To a Burman such a man is no better than a buffalo or a dog. In those of low degree this feeling shows itself in pitying kindness, in those in high positions in arrogance and insulting rudeness.

The unpleasant allegations of Father San Germano may be considered cancelled by the advocacy of the two military gentlemen, but there remains the united charge of unwarrantable laziness. Let us see what can be said for the defence on this point.

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It may be taken for granted that the whole human race is more or less hampered by a dislike for work when there is no necessity for doing it. In addition to sharing this weakness, the Burman is fettered by a multiplicity of fortunate and unfortunate days. When he is born, his sadā, or horoscope, is cast, detailing minutely the moment at which he appeared, and the influence the presiding constellation has over him personally; and this sadā must be carefully examined before anything can be done. But beyond this there are a great variety of unlucky days which more or less concern everybody, and have to be avoided if a man is to hope for success in his enterprise or his journey. To enlist the sympathy of maritime England, I will begin with the superstition about Friday:

Thaukkya ye gyaung
Ma thwa kaung.

On Friday boats sailing
Cause weeping and wailing.

On the contrary, if you begin the study of a subject on Friday you will become an authority on it. Thursday is also a good day; but if you commence on Tuesday or Saturday you will soon die. Saturday is a bad day for everything, especially for fires—a fact which the Fire Brigade would probably corroborate. But doubtless it is somewhat irritating for an Englishman when he wants to commence a journey, and has everything ready except the bullocks for the cart, to find that he cannot persuade his servants to buy or engage them till Sunday, because such a proceeding would

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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hopelessly lazy and averse to steady labour. The fact that men are always to be got eventually is no argument against the general belief in the theory, for the English persuade people to all manner of iniquity. Staunch members of the Order of the Yellow Robe will tell you that the brandy-drinkers and the opium-eaters (whom the English Thathanabaing, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other good people believe to be so very numerous in Burma) are very frequently proselytes, and, at any rate, have been much influenced by the white foreigners. And probably every officer in the Commission who has at length got together a band of men to journey towards the nagā's jaws will bear out the assertion that they must have been a bad lot, and drank raw spirits and chewed opium enough to gladden the heart of an anti-opium society man in search of a frightful example.

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It may be asserted that the unlucky days were invented as an excuse for laziness; but the prevalence of the system with regard to other matters disproves this. For example, the blind god is supposed to laugh at barriers of rank and time and space; but most Burmans have a profound belief in the yan-pet linga—the rhyme of hostile pairs, referred to in the chapter on marriage. Again, in forming a partnership for purposes of trade, or the like, a due regard must be paid to birthdays. Lucky combinations are as follows:—Sunday and Friday, Tuesday and Thursday, Saturday and Wednesday, Monday and Yahu.

When you get a Burman on his lucky day, he will display an amount of "spasmodic energy" which has surprised many travellers into calling him hard-working. The boatmen on the Irrawaddy and the Sittang often row six, eight, and even ten hours at a stretch, on no more solid food than cold boiled rice, with a fragment or two of salt fish or curried vegetables. But that is when it is their "kingly day." Try them on a pyatthada day, and they will not even drift with the stream.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

517 779 if he does but remember the first two precepts, he is on the right path.

He does do this. Happiness is the aim he seeks. Work and power and money are but the means by which he will arrive at the leisure to teach his own soul. First the body, then the spirit; but with us it is surely first the body, and then the body again.

He often watches us with surprise. He sees us work and work and work; he sees us grow old quickly, and our minds get weary; he sees our sympathies grow very narrow, our ideas bent into one groove, our whole souls destroyed for a little money, a little fame, a little promotion, till we go home, and do not know what to do with ourselves, because we have no work and no sympathy with anything; and at last we die, and take down with us our souls—souls fit for nothing but to be driven for ever with a goad behind and a golden fruit in front.

461 But do not suppose that the Burmese are idle. Such a nation of workers was never known. Every man works, every woman works, every child works. Life is not an easy thing, but a hard, and there is a great deal of work to be done. There is not an idle man or woman in all Burma. The class of those who live on other men's labour is unknown. I do not think the Burman would care for such a life, for a certain amount of work is good, he knows. A little work he likes; a good deal of work he does, because he is obliged often to do so to earn even the little he requires. And that is the end. He is a free man, never a slave to other men, nor to himself.

if there are many fish, if the water is bad they may die off - and do not come down to the KHE. When the water is good we get many fish. When the water is bad it is called YE-HNÄ-DE (the water is hurt). When the water is bad they die off on their own and become putrid on this side; they do not come down. When the water is bad it stops the coming down of fish even more effectively than if a YIN barrier were put up (further upstream.) They do not come down to the south of the KHE. 226 221 132

"There are 80 or 100 fishermen working at the CHAUNG-MA-GYI IN where I work. Thirty of these are from TWA-GYI-HAT and they are the only IN workers there, although there are 7 other INS in the neighbourhood. They work for 6 months out of the year. During the month of TAGU when the fish is sold, we start on the YIN and work through the months of KASON, NAYON, WAGAUNG, TAWTHALIN and in TAWTHALINwe place it in the IN. Water comes down and with it the fish, and we end upabout the month of PYATHO. In the hot season we catch the remaining fish and after the hot season the INS are again auctioned by the Government. 226

"Night and day the fish are coming down and they have to be gathered up in wicker baskets and poured into tubs. They are coming down all the time. We have no special work time; both night and day. That is why there have to be so many workers. We have watches. If this person watches this night, that person watches the next night and another person the next night. They have to stay till morning. The person who has watched up till morning is given a turn (to rest) and another person placed there for the next night. The fisherman works for a day and a night. Then shifts are changed. The man who works from the afternoon is given a rest in the morning. There are shifts of eight to nine men at a time. These nine men are changed after a day and a night. They rest for a day and a night. 226 461

"Some of the more common fish are:- Nga Thaing, Nga Gyin, Nga Gyaung, Nga Myit Chin, Nga Dan, Nga Myin Yin; small fish are plentiful, Nga Khanne, Nga Hpare Aung, Nga Bat, Nga Khu, Nga Gyi; you get a lot. During one shift, (one day and one night) 2000 fish may come down, 3000 fish may come, or there may be 500, or there may be only 100. You cannot say for sure. At the end of the SHAW the fish are scooped up with kerosene tins and poured into the boat with wicker baskets. After that they are taken home. We take both big and small fish. The big ones are caught by hand and kept alive in big tubs, and it is the small fish that are scooped up with kerosene tins. We take all the fish that are stranded at the sluice end. The tiny fish escape through the YIN. Some larger fish also escape if the YIN cracks are wide.

"The large fish are kept alive and sent to the Rangoon markets and to various towns. They usually stay alive this way. When the distance is great they are placed in ice and sent. The other fish are dried or made into fish paste or NGAPI. In making Ngapi, the heads are first cut off. The scales are removed by wrapping the fish in gunny-bags and stamping with the feet after the bag has been placed in a tub. After that they are washed and salt is put in. After mixing thoroughly with salt they are pressed into jars. Those who want to pound their fish into NGAPI DAUNG (pounded ngapi) leave their fish to become putrid and then pound them. Those who want to keep them raw (ASHIN) do not. 226 438 263

Mr Aye Myaing describes the preparation of ngapi as follows:-

"The fish have to be chopped and placed in water; after the scales are removed, the fishes are chopped and placed in water for a night. In the morning the putrid fish are taken out, mixed with salt and laid out to dry. In the evening they are again mixed with salt and pounded. You pound the fish today, lay 251 263

The daily work schedule of U Myaing while he was working as a fish processor (2 months in a year) was as follows:- 512 461 264

He rose at four or five in the morning said his prayers, drank plain tea, had boiled beans, fried fish and rice left over from the previous day's evening meal. After that he went to collect fish, bring it to the bank and start work on it. He rested from 11 o'clock to 2 o'clock. At two he resumed work till about five when he would be finished for the day. Sometimes he would sleep at the work place after returning home for his evening meal.

Work in the Refugee Camp.

Shortly after arriving at the Camp U Myaing worked in Sulim Park near the Kokine market where a factory for spinning and weaving cloth was being set up. The contractor was Chinese, and he engaged between 30 to 35 labourers every day. These labourers were unskilled and they were employed in levelling the ground and laying the foundation of the factory. Most of the labourers were Indians - there being only two Burmans, U Myaing and Ma Aye Myaing got Rs. 2/-. The working hours stretched from eight in the morning to 12 noon, with a break of one hour at 12. At one o'clock they resumed work and continued until five in the evening. In the mornings they had to go to the factory by themselves, and this took them about a half hour walk. Sometimes they were sent home in a truck in the evenings. U Myaing had to enquire each day at various places for a chance to work. He was not always successful. 722 461 464 331

It was not usual for Ma Aye Myaing to come along like this to work as a labourer. This was the first time she did so. Ma Aye Myaing said that in future she would accompany U Myaing whenever there are prospects of such work. They knew that women worked in this way, but had not known that such work was available. [562]

As a matter of fact, I met U Myaing through the mats which were made in his camp. We got dinner place mats through him. These are rectangular 1½ feet by 2 feet mats of finely-woven split cane in an over 2 - under 2 pattern. They cost Rs. 2/8 each. U Myaing arranged for the making of these mats and collected the money for them, but 285 437

285 H37 they were made by friends. Ma Aye Myaing and Daw Aw Zar appear to specialise in the larger mats such as used for sleeping. Mat making appears to be an occupation which in ordinary times is unimportant but it is relied heavily upon in bad times.

461 562 561 [277] 874 [294] The children are put to work around the house and in processing the fish at an early age. Just recently U Myaing's eldest daughter left school to learn a trade. She left one month ago from the fourth standard, to learn cheroot rolling. In another month's time she will have learnt how. She does not have to pay any fees - neither is she paid for her help. She lives with her aunt (U Myaing's sister) and has her meals there. Near their house there is also an embroidery shop which is owned by her aunt. At night U Myaing's daughter is taught embroidery and sewing by her aunt. The owner of the cheroot rolling shop is not a relative, but the women who work there are aunts and grand-aunts of the girl. When she has learnt the trade, then she will be paid between two and three rupees a day on piece work basis.

463 363 512 At present (May 1951) U Myaing is working as a sweeper in the Rangoon Municipality on a monthly wage of Rs. 80/-. There is an overseer placed over him every day. U Myaing's main job is to keep one street in town clean. He leaves his house at six and arrives at the overseer's by half past six and there a roll-call is taken of about a hundred of them. At seven he begins on his street and stops at about half-eight to go to answer the roll-call (see below for rest of schedule).. He has personal contact only with the overseer, the docter and the WUNDAUK (official). All three of them go around the town to see if they work hard enough. The WUNDAUK also comes everyday to witness the roll-call. "If we do not do good work we shall be dismissed. Everything is in their hands. But they do so after two or three warnings. We do not possess any rights at all. Sometimes offenders are sent to other streets that require harder labour. "

U Myaing's street is located in Myeni-gon, and he has to clean the street of dirt as well as clean the drains on either side.

His daily schedule at present is as follows: He rises at 4, washes his face and cleans his teeth, says his prayers and then has plain tea which Ma Aye Myaing has prepared for him. At six he leaves

sufficient food for myself and my family." Yet, it is significant that he[1] manifests no anxiety symtoms, and appears happy and carefree. This suggests that despite the fact that he is presented with insecurity he does not react to it with tensions that have nervous manifestations. The sense of insecurity does not seem to be in his pattern of living, consequently his response is ill-defined.

The points of difference that U Myaing especially emphasised were:-

1. A few weeks of intensive work in Pathwe would get him more than a whole year of salary working in Rangoon.

2. His income in Rangoon is established at a low level. In Pathwe he might make 3 or 4 times his average income from fish products in a good year. On bad years he might just break even. But this did not affect his everyday living quality - since his food was for the most part gathered (fish, fruits etc.) or secured from the cattle loan (baskets of rice).

3. If he was sick in Pathwe his standard of living was not threatened. He made his cash in a short time and had ample leisure for resting. In Rangoon if he does not work he does not eat.

4. In Pathwe he usually had a surplus of 1000 to 1500 rupees on hand during a year. To be lent out (free of interest) to friends and relatives or (usually) invested in fish or family accoutrement. Now he lives from hand to mouth.

5. The loss of comfort and ease is severely felt by the adults. In Rangoon he works to stay alive, in Pathwe, to enjoy a full life.

[1 i.e., U Myaing -- ANALYST]

General Attitudes of the Burmese toward Work.

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Rank and status in the Burmese Village is determined to a large extent on the basis of occupation - with the factor of wealth where applicable taking precedence over occupation. The highest rank is accorded to the Buddhist monks who exert the ultimate influence. Government officials including the township officers, the THU GYI (headman) and elders, and the schoolmaster occupy the second rank. The large land owners (of this group the rice-mill owners rate highest) rank next. Below these are the tradesmen - the paddy dealers, shop keepers and small holdings farmers who comprise the bulk of the population. Professional artisans such as carpenters, blacksmiths, gold and silver smiths occupy a lower position. However, it is common for the small holdings farmers to practice a secondary occupation such as pottery making.

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Fishermen and hunters are looked down on by the rest of the community because they offend Buddhist precepts by taking life. In this class also are those who raise animals (cows, poultry, pigs) for food, smugglers and brewers. Fishermen, particularly those such as U Myaing who operate IN fisheries often become wealthy, but the stigma of the source of this wealth is remembered by the community.

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A story is told of a rich fisherman who came to cover the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon with gold plate. Unfortunately, he had sinned so much by taking the lives of fish that he could not see the pagoda. In a rage he returned to his IN to cover its posts with the gold. Because of the stigma attached to fishing those who make their living in this way tend to live together in their own communities. Thus Pathee, U Myaing's village is primarily a fisherman's community.

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In the days of the Burmese kings, wealthy men and nobles (THAKIN) would assign people under their command to serve as pagoda slaves. Their names were engraved in stone and their descendants for all eternity assigned to this position. The duties were light - consisting mainly of sweeping the platforms and carrying for the images, but the social position was next to the lowest. It is believed that the flower vendors on the platform of the Rangoon

pagodas and those throughout the country are descendants of the pagoda slaves.

Beggars are rated below the pagoda slaves - but, because of the Buddhist merit associated with giving do well for themselves. The beggars live in communities on the outskirts of the town often in cemeteries. They are thought to exhume the dead to get the coins placed in the mouth of the deceased to ensure expenses on his journey to heaven. The wood of the coffin is believed to be used in constructing their huts. Professional undertakers or morticians are regarded with horror since they like the beggars, make their living from the dead. The functions of burial are performed gratis by the entire village. A story is currently going round the University dormitories telling of an immensely wealthy Burmese coffin maker in Rangoon who has offered riches to the young man who will marry his beautiful daughter. When the future seems blank the students' friend advises "Hey, why don't you go and marry the coffin maker's daughter?" It seems that the money would scarcely compensate for the social discrimation. The extent to which the occupation classes are rigid in marriage and other social exchanges is an interesting problem.

A young man is obliged to remain within the occupation class of his family or to rise to greater heights. He is advised at an early age to "be simple, aim high, and tell the truth." When children play at daccits (thieves) or other "low class" games their parents object to their low aspirations and advise them to play nobles and ministers. One would feel justified in remaining idle rather than accept a position below that of his birth. It is better to accept a clerks job at a low salary than an artisans at a high salary. On the other hand those born into lower status occupation groups tend to be satisfied with their state as a condition of birth. In Rangoon, however, even the hawkers may have ambitions to achieve fame and fortune. The opportunities for social mobility is greater in the towns and cities but difinitely restricted in the villages.

Apprenticeship to trades begins at the age of 12 to 14 years, and usually lasts for several years. Ordinarily the youth is attached to the shop of a relative where he lives and is payed a subsistence wage while learning. The key to high positions lies in education in

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The key to high positions lies in education in the high schools and Universities. Family support is necessary for this and the student is constantly aware of his obligation to succeed for their benefit. "One tree can support a thousand birds" illustrates the dependency of the relatives on the successful individual.

In order to succeed one needs each of these three qualities: KAMMA (fate or luck), NYAN (intelligence), and WIRIYA(industriousness) The failure of any one can cause the lack of success. Ordinarily, however, KAMMA is blamed in cases of failure - and the other two credited for success. The concept of KAMMA includes merit and demerit compiled in all previous existences. Because of this convenient excuse the true causes of failure are seldom analysed by the individual and he does not have a sense of personal blame or shame. Also social condemnation does not fall heavily on the unsuccessful who has tried and failed. However, one should finish what he starts or not attempt it, "once you start climbing the pole you must reach the top". The individual may not achieve fame or fortune but he is expected to maintain his birth position. His relatives, who suffer shame if he does not, help him. A major contribution of the individual is an advantageous marriage within or above his occupational group.

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What does one strive for, by work, in the Burmese society? Not subsistence, for food is ordinarily cheap and easily attained in the villages. Clothing, shelter and the other necessities of life are also not the objective. The subsistence pattern is simple and essentially homogeneous throughout the village.

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The ordinary head of a household thinks of three major benefits to be gained from wealth. The first and most immediate are jewels to adorn the women of the family. The status of the family is reflected in public by the bangles, necklaces and earrings worn by the ladies. Diamonds are most prized and the size is important. However, most important is that each female be provided with "a set" of jewelry. The wife of the middle and upper status group particularly will prod the husband until he provides these necessities. The women's clothing and also the husbands and his son's must also be the finest they can afford.

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The second urge for wealth arises out of the desire for old age security. Hence gold coins are saved (hidden) against the day when

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the husband is too old to work. Aged parents are invariably respected but those who can still support themselves are "worshipped". Parents do not rely on their sons who have their own families to support but feel that their daughters will always "bring them a cup of curry".

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The third urge is to have wealth to donate to the Buddhist church. This is regarded as a sound investment since it not only brings a most satisfying honour especially in old age (to be a "pagoda giver") but also counts as merit credited to the individual's account in eternity.

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Competition is keenly felt between individuals and families of the same occupation group or adjacent groups but not between the lower and upper classes. An exception is where family traditional land has changed hands - and hard feelings may persist. A carpenter's family does not envy and covet the riches of a government official's family. His lot is due to KAUK and even if he wished to attain such fortune it would be beyond his abilities. More important, it is not expected of him. So the carpenter is content with cheap jewelry for his women and an occasional gold coin - but the pattern is the same as for the upper class. However among the individuals and families of an occupation level there is much rivalry for the benefits wealth can bring. It is a point of pride to have the largest diamonds at a social function, and to give the biggest pagoda. Wives brag that their husbands "prevent the heirs of their hands from singeing" - that they have servants to cook. Rank and recognition are based on these considerations.

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The women of the family exert powerful influence in financial matters and are respected for their sound judgement. Women's occupations include cigar manufacturing, pottery making, and especially shop keeping.

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The beginning of an enterprise is conditioned by the wisdom of the ancients and especially the date and place which are given by formula in the Burmese calendar. There are YEI-HAZA (day king of) "fortunate days" and PYAD-THADA "unlucky days". For example the calendar announces that Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays of a particular month are fortunate days to begin enterprises, and other days either unfortunate or neutral. Rangoon sophisticates (but never villagers) tell such stories as this: Two phongyis travelled by boat; the first boarded the boat on a fortunate day to begin travelling. The next day the boat came to the second phongyi's village. This was an unfortunate

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777 day on the calendar but the second phongyi decided to embark anyway. Both phongyis were lost when the boat sank that day.

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626 The revered position of phongyis is open to all regardless of birth or position. It is felt that some take up the robe because they are unsuccessful in life, or wish an "easy living" - but perhaps this attitude is one of modern sophisticates. Certainly the dominant position of the brotherhood is unchallenged. Occasionally differences arise between the headman and the phongyis of a village. But the phongyis invariably prevail. Offending laymen can be "deprived the gate of heaven" by phongyis refusing to accept HSOON, alms, from th This is called inverting the begging bowl THA-BEIT-MAUK-TAI (Begging bowl-upturn) and is the current phrase for any sort of a "strike".

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356 Some unprincipalled phongyis have sought to enrich themselves by accepting gifts of land or other property, or by selling gifts for money to traders. When they leave the brotherhood and become laymen again this property becomes theirs. Such occurences appear to be rare and are controlled by stipulations of the givers. For example a donor would hesitate to give paddy land to a suspected phongyi but might agree to giving the crops while retaining title.

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641 The government or administrative class is looked up to with great respect - in part a carry over from the days of royalty, in part an attitude towards power and influence. However, while the villager today may not know the details of the new constitution he knows there is a "code" wherein he can secure impartial justice.

753 777 262 The concept of KAMMA (fate) is important only in determining the general well-being of the individual, as seen in Daw Aw Zar's belief that her general good health was due to a morally-lived previous existence. "It is like a shadow". Some specific situations like being born blind is attributed to one's KAMMA - in this case the person had been a notorious fighter of cocks in the previous existence; cocks being frequently blinded in the fights.

Each person is regarded as subject to some special disorder or weakness such as being especially subject to colds or headaches, or stomach troubles. Collectively these are referred to as "age-group" weaknesses. (MIYAT - girls' weakness; DULAH - boys' weaknesses.) But this is due to childhood illnesses and neglect of early troubles rather than KAMMA. Persons with the weaknesses noted above avoid cucumbers (a "cold" vegetable), or hot foods including liquor (these cause greater heat to rise to the head), or green or raw vegetables (hard to digest). The choice of the correct diet to suit one's particular condition is important.

751 526 •461 757 514 Bodily exercise is a prime consideration for health. Calisthenics or sports for this purpose are unknown or unrecognized and by " healthful exercise " is meant everyday work activities. Regular daily motion is regarded as necessary for health, and a purgative is taken regularly once a month. The idea is to " clean out disease ". Purgatives are taken first in most sicknesses. This is followed by drinking preparations in hot water to induce perspiration along with woolen blankets. The colour of the urine is checked "daily" since a too yellow colour indicates an unhealthy condition. If so - one must drink additional quantities of water and coconut water. "Urine takes the place of perspiration in cold weather". Over-working and lack of sleep also lead to unhealthiness. The ideal [93] sleep period is from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. with a nap thrown in from 12 to 2 after "breakfast".

158 753 Too much worrying SAY.TAWGLO.KOYEH (mind-beating-because-body-crush) leads to sickness. This is a common problem for mothers who worry about their children's futures. It results in THEEJEH-PYEEH (small black bitter (gall)-disorder) where the gall fluid is

369 and women too did the same, and wore their HTAMEINS breast high.
291 Here except for the refugees, he does not see much of this except when
562 people are bathing in the public water hydrants. When it is hot the men wear T shirts and the women wear light garments.

369 U Myaing says that the ordinary city dweller cannot do as much
464 hard labour as the average villager. For example, he cannot carry
461 a bag of rice on his shoulders if suddenly called upon to do so.

The workers from Rangoon are much more acute than the workers from the village. They speak and understand English and Hindustani and so get to know of any possible job long before the others. The villagers do not have these advantages, and so have to join work only later and they are placed to work under them.

563 As far as U Myaing is concerned, there is no racial animosity
464 towards Indians and workers of other races. This is due to the fact that there is no racial discrimination on the part of the employers, the first suitable applicant being given the work.

369 He finds that Rangoon has a much more equable climate than
132 Pathwe. In Rangoon it is not as cold as in Pathwe, where in the cold season it was very cold even though they lived in a proper house and kept all the doors and windows shut. He says that they would not be able in Pathwe to live in an open dwelling like they do at present.

369 Their relatives in Rangoon keep to themselves a great deal.
571 They work on their own and earn on their own. In Rangoon each family
602 has only sufficient for itself. "We cannot help them financially and neither can they help us much. When we go on a visit they can invite us to join in a meal or to partake of sweet tea, but they would not be able to lend us fifty or a hundred rupees. In Pathwe we could lend each other any amount up till a thousand five hundred rupees and that free of interest. These loans also used to be repaid only when it is convenient to the debtor. It would be inconvenient to have to repay a loan while the money was in the form of goods."

159 U Myaings eldest daughter has returned to the camp because the
369 woman who owns the cheroot rolling business has temporarily closed it
602 down and gone to Pantanaw with goods like onions, prawns and textiles. Since the girl is not sufficiently dexterous to find work elsewhere as

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In Pathiwe the adults were all occupied with the question of how to acquire money. The children played at skipping a rope. There is also a game where two children sit facing each other and raise progressively higher and higher barriers with their feet and their hands, while a third child has to jump high enough to clear the obstraction. If he succeeds they raise it slightly higher and so on. If he fails, then it is his turn to provide the barrier with one while the other starts jumping from the lowest level. They also play the games "SALTS" and "HOP-SCOTCH" Then there is a game where about 20 children stand in a circle with faces turned inwards. There is a person left outside who runs round the circle and while running, drops a small bundle of cloth behind someone's back. If that person knows of it he picks up the bundle and chases the first child round the circle and if fleet enough has an opportunity of dealing him several hard whacks before he finds shelter in the vacant place of the person following and it is then the turn of the person with the bundle to make the rounds and drop it behind someone elses back. If a person does not realise that the bundle has been laid down behind him the first person completes another round, and then picks it up himself and chases him around the circle back to his own place.

There is another game which is known as "THE HUGE LIN-NWE SNAKE" where the children form a long line by holding each other's waist from behind. Someone then has to come pretending to sell something and the head of the line makes a purchase. When the seller demands payment he is referred by each child to the one behind him until the leader shouts that he can take the person last in the line in payment if he can catch him. The seller tries to do this while the whole line wriggles and twists in an effort to foil him.

When U Myaing was young he used to play "THE TURTLE AND THE HOOP". They first had to find a person who would play as the "turtle" and to do this they recited the Burmese alphabet starting with the letter "KA" for one person and "KHA" for the second and so on round and round the circle until the letter "A" is reached. The person on whom this letter falls has to be the "turtle". He is placed in a circle with as many stones as there are people in the game.

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25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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115. WATER SCOOP (KA-HNWE).

for fodder, the corn is cut close to the ground, having first been laid by pressing it down with bamboos, which makes it easier. For reaping, the villagers co-operate. But in the plains of the delta, where cultivation has extended so greatly, there is not labour enough on the spot to reap the crop. Harvest labourers come down from Burma Proper and also large numbers from the south of India (p. 159). In the plains reapers get their two meals and a quarter of a bushel of grain a day or the equivalent in money (p. 56). In the hills a reaper gets a bushel a day for his labour. The common wages of daily labour are about half a rupee in Pegu, and a quarter less in Burma Proper. Before 1850, when the export trade began, wages were only half as much.

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The sheaves are left to dry for a day in the sun and then gathered into garbs. These are piled on a dry field into a circular heap some three feet high, and broad enough for a herd of buffaloes to tramp round upon and tread the grain off the ear, to which it is attached by a slender petiole. Another way is to pile the garbs in a high crescent-shaped heap, round the central space of which four to six head of cattle are made to travel abreast and tread the garbs which are cast down from above. The grain keeps best in the husk and is stored in bins of bamboo wattle smeared with clay (*sabaji*, Nos. 119, 120).

The covering of the rice-grain is a strong adherent husk like that of barley, but mostly without any beard. Rice in the husk is called *Sabé* (Engl. paddy).

116. CUTTING THE CROP IN THE GREAT PLAIN.